

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method for treating a bone condition associated with breakdown of bone tissue or bone loss, comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of ~~preptin, preptin analog, or a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof~~ a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

2-10. (Canceled)

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 1, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 6 3 conservative amino acid substitutions.

12. (Currently amended) The method of claim 9 1, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

13. (Currently amended) A method for increasing or maintaining bone density, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of ~~preptin, preptin analog, or a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof~~ a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

14-22. (Canceled)

23. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~24~~ 13, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to ~~6~~ 3 conservative amino acid substitutions.

24. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~24~~ 13, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

25. (Currently amended) A method for stimulating osteoblast growth or ~~modulating~~ inhibiting osteoblast apoptosis, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of ~~preptin, preptin analog, or a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 60% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, or a fragment thereof~~ a peptide comprising an amino acid sequence that is at least 90% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3, wherein the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

26-34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~33~~ 25, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to ~~6~~ 3 conservative amino acid substitutions.

36. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~33~~ 25, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3 with up to 2 conservative amino acid substitutions.

37-52. (Canceled)

53. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the peptide is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

54. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

55. (New) The method of claim 1, wherein the peptide consists of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

56. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the peptide is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

57. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

58. (New) The method of claim 13, wherein the peptide consists of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

59. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the peptide is at least 95% identical to SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

60. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the peptide comprises SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

61. (New) The method of claim 25, wherein the peptide consists of SEQ ID NO: 1, 2, or 3.

62. (New) A method for treating a bone condition associated with breakdown of bone tissue or bone loss, comprising administering to a patient in need thereof an effective amount of a peptide comprising the amino acid sequence Asp Val Ser Thr R₁ R₂ R₃ Val Leu Pro Asp R₄ Phe Pro Arg Tyr Pro Val Gly Lys Phe Phe R₅ R₆ Asp Thr Trp R₇ Gln Ser R₈ R₉ Arg Leu (formula (I)); wherein
R₁ is Ser or Pro;
R₂ is Gln or Pro;
R₃ is Ala or Thr;
R₄ is Asp or Asn;
R₅ is Gln or Lys;
R₆ is Tyr or Phe;
R₇ is Arg or Lys;
R₈ is Ala or Thr; and
R₉ is Gly or Gln; wherein
the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

63. (New) A method for increasing or maintaining bone density, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of a peptide comprising the amino acid sequence Asp Val Ser Thr R₁ R₂ R₃ Val Leu Pro Asp R₄ Phe Pro Arg Tyr Pro Val Gly Lys Phe Phe R₅ R₆ Asp Thr Trp R₇ Gln Ser R₈ R₉ Arg Leu (formula (I)); wherein
R₁ is Ser or Pro;
R₂ is Gln or Pro;
R₃ is Ala or Thr;
R₄ is Asp or Asn;
R₅ is Gln or Lys;
R₆ is Tyr or Phe;
R₇ is Arg or Lys;
R₈ is Ala or Thr; and
R₉ is Gly or Gln; wherein

the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.

64. (New) A method for stimulating osteoblast growth or inhibiting osteoblast apoptosis, comprising administering to a subject in need thereof an effective amount of a peptide comprising the amino acid sequence Asp Val Ser Thr R₁ R₂ R₃ Val Leu Pro Asp R₄ Phe Pro Arg Tyr Pro Val Gly Lys Phe Phe R₅ R₆ Asp Thr Trp R₇ Gln Ser R₈ R₉ Arg Leu (formula (I)); wherein

R₁ is Ser or Pro;

R₂ is Gln or Pro;

R₃ is Ala or Thr;

R₄ is Asp or Asn;

R₅ is Gln or Lys;

R₆ is Tyr or Phe;

R₇ is Arg or Lys;

R₈ is Ala or Thr; and

R₉ is Gly or Gln; wherein

the peptide promotes osteoblast proliferation.